

INFORMATION REPORT
CONFIDENTIAL

COUNTRY Korea

SUBJECT Popular Attitudes Toward the Government in
South Kyongsang

PLACE
ACQUIRED

25X1C

DATE OF
INFO.

CD NO.

DATE DISTR. 2 FEB 51

NO. OF PAGES 1

NO. OF ENCLS.
(LISTED BELOW)

SUPPLEMENT TO
REPORT NO.

25X1X

1. In October and November 1950, South Kyongsang (South Cholla) authorities estimated that there were approximately 60,000 Communist troops scattered in Chiri-san (127-44, 35-19), Yosu (127-44, 34-44), Suncheon (127-30, 34-53), and Hwasun (127-00, 35-04) areas. Communist units were strong enough in some instances to attack villages and make off with all the food, clothing, bedding, and other portable items available, after forcing the inhabitants to leave their houses and assemble at a central point. On 25 October, Communists attacked Hwasun but were repulsed by ROK troops.
2. The local people are very uneasy because they feel that, until the Republic of Korea army actually mops up all guerrilla forces, individual repulses will not put an end to Communist activity. As control of various areas changes hands frequently between ROK and Communist troops, each village family keeps two national flags, the red North Korean banner and the ROK flag. They greet the ROK troops with the appropriate flag when normal government is functioning but hide their ROK banner and bring out the North Korean emblem when the Communist troops take the village. Under such difficulties, many village dwellers have abandoned their houses and property and moved to neighboring cities.
3. The ROK Ministry of National Defense ordered all unit commanders to complete mopping-up operations on guerrillas before the end of 1950. It did not appear, as of late November, that the ROK army would be able to accomplish this task, however. Village inhabitants feel that the army suffered too many difficulties and that its morale is so low it would be unable to cope with the guerrilla situation. They complain about the inefficiency of the Ministry of National Defense and object to the friction between Japanese-trained, Chinese-trained, and Manchurian-trained cliques, and hope for the appointment of new personnel to keep the national defense program from disintegration.

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Next Review Date: 2008



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